

1. **SHARE Center – SHARE Center building upgrades**

The SHARE Center predominantly serves individuals and families who are struggling with homelessness. We provide food, day shelter, basic needs items, case management, support groups, and peer supports. The requested funds would help us make renovations to our building that will allow us to provide more comprehensive services to people in need. Two of the biggest barriers that keeps people from succeeding are not having a place to keep your belongings and not having access to a shower. The requested funds would mostly be used to construct a locker room and a shower. Additionally, our building was constructed in the early 1980s and is in need of weatherization upgrades in order to operate more efficiently.

Estimated cost: \$120,000

2. **Battle Creek Area Habitat for Humanity – Wheelchair ramps**

For many years Habitat has been building ramps for seniors or for the disabled throughout Calhoun County. We have a volunteer base who have a passion for helping people. Our primary programs include home ownership, home repair, and our wheelchair ramp program. For people who need a ramp, it's often their first opportunity to get out of their house in quite some time. A ramp can provide access to health and healthcare, socialization, and freedom that they would not otherwise have.

Estimated cost: \$50,000 would build about 25 ramps. We do not include labor in the price of our ramps, as our team is volunteer-based.

3. **Charitable Union – GAP Nutrition**

For over a decade Charitable Union has partnered with the Calhoun County WIC Office to distribute baby formula to infants in need. This program received funding from United Way of the Battle Creek & Kalamazoo Region. This funding ended as of July 1st, 2021. Over fifty percent of all babies born in our community are born into poverty and there is only one baby pantry within our community to meet the growing need for infant nutrition. WIC is a supplemental food program and our program is intended to fill the "gap." For our parents who cannot make ends meet and provide food on the table running out of baby formula is a disastrous situation.

Estimated cost: \$150,000 for a three-year program that fully meets the need for infant formula needs

4. **What A Do Theatre – Bring live theater to Battle Creek**

What A Do Theatre has been busy with inquiries of helping organizations with live theatre and entertainment at events, bringing live theatre downtown, programming in schools, and servicing all ages in the community with the opportunity to participate in theatre as well as watch live theatre. What A Do is in desperate need of assistance to recover from the pandemic to get theatre back on its feet. Mainly with operational expenses to help develop programming and provide services to those requesting. We currently serve

all ages, but have been asked to partner with Harper Creek Schools, Battle Creek Public Schools (Fremont), Willard Library, Kool Center, Leila Arboretum, CareWell Services, and other venues. In addition to these partnerships, we provide youth workshops and programs, live adult programs, and continue to expand programming as our requests come in. Our growth and success will rely on the support of the city and community to help to make it possible to grow.

Estimated cost: \$50,000

5. **Washington Heights United Methodist Church and Community – Affordable housing/Recover Our Neighborhood**

Washington Heights United Methodist Church is calling on the City of Battle Creek to use ARPA dollars as an investment grant in the amount of \$360,000 to Washington Heights United Methodist Church and Community the “Hub of HOPE” for the Recover Our Neighborhood program.

Your investment will allow Washington Heights United Methodist Church to:

- Recover our community, with and for the people in the community by purchasing distressed and vacant properties (from the City, the County and Private owners) and turning them into beautiful homes.
- Reduce blight by performing minor renovations, engage in beautification projects painting, landscaping and lead abatement that will enhance the neighborhood’s appearance and improve residents’ health.
- Expand access to affordable housing and increase homeownership for seniors and low to middle income families.
- Work with the RISE Together Initiative and others in a collaborative effort to Eliminate homelessness.
- Provide leverage and improve African American home ownership by providing:
 - o rental homes with the option to buy. This program is idea because it assists with home ownership eliminating many of the barriers.
 - o Offer down payment assistance and small loan programs-to create equitable economic and sustainable opportunities
- Offer and/or connect participants to Financial Literacy, First time home buyers’ literacy and other services.
- Provide opportunities to purchase suitable housing in the Washington Heights area.
- Train and hire qualified staff.
- Have continued access to Legal Counsel.

Washington Heights United Methodist Church and Community will take dilapidated properties and turn them into beautiful homes.

We will offer affordable, efficient, and beautiful homes that will complement and assist the beautification composition of the community. This will help to restore, recover, and revitalize the community and increase property values. Qualified staff will help potential buyers understand the responsibility of home ownership, discuss, assist, and eliminate any obstacles that may prevent them from purchasing a home. We will diligently work with the homebuyer to ensure that homeownership is successful for the long haul. Washington Heights United Methodist Church and Community plans to identify and implement projects that will beautify the Washington Heights community, increase desirability of commercial and residential real estate, and encourage residential homeowners and business owners to invest in landscaping and cleanup of their properties. Beautiful communities attract new growth and development, as well as protects property values in both residential and commercial community. The beautification

portion of this project includes but are not limited to landscaping improvements (done by landscaping co-op comprised of community members who have their own landscaping company), debris clean up, lighting, and minor housing repairs.

Estimated cost: \$360,000

6. Southwest Michigan Community Impact Association – **Affordable Housing Impact**

The project will provide the needed housing in the targeted area NPC2 seeking funding from federal, state and county along with city to impact the affordable housing needs. We hope to create the self sustaining system that will increase and expand throughout the community impacting blight, housing and employment. The project will impact individuals and families, and will increase impact in the future.

Estimated cost: Not known at this time

7. New Level Sports Ministries – **Communication hub / can be via news blast email to organizations**

Using community pillars to receive and disperse important information with the community.

Estimated cost: Unknown

8. New Level Sports Ministries – **New Level Sports**

The Youth Village provides jobs, early childhood care, education (summer and after school), youth sports leagues, affordable housing, etc.

Estimated cost: \$4 million

9. Calhoun ISD/Community Action/pulse – **Early Childhood Initiatives**

Address early childhood needs to stabilize the sector, and invest in attracting/retaining a quality workforce. Incentives and equitable pay options include: down payment/rental assistance, connecting employees with healthcare options, teledoc services, flexible scheduling, livable wages, discounted childcare. Battle Creek is facing a severe EC workforce shortage & is currently not expected to meet the child care demand generated from the community's reopening & the return of many parents to in-person employment. Research shows that the national child care workforce has shrunk 15% since pre-pandemic times. Roughly 35% of child care workers were laid off at the beginning of the pandemic, with only half of those returning in the last nine months. Another complicating factor is that workers across industries are unsure if they want to return to low-wage jobs given the uncertain economy. A recent report from the Pew Research Center found that 66% of unemployed/furloughed adults surveyed said they were seriously considering changing their occupation or field of work. If this trend is applied to the EC workforce, the staffing shortage will only worsen, creating additional challenges to meet the needs of families & to support the city's economic recovery.

Estimated cost: \$2.35 million estimate, some costs per year, some unknown

10. SHARE Center – **Capital needs and service expansions**

Capital needs and service expansions - drinking fountains, walk-in cooler, locker room, showers, ADA door openers, HVAC upgrade, kitchen equipment Family services for over 5,000 families living below a survival threshold - personnel and office construction Landscaping, including pavilion, ADA walkway, outdoor furniture, and trees

Estimated cost: \$364,000 total - \$314,000 for capital needs/service expansions; \$50,000 to improve meals program for 1-2 years

11. Kingdom Builders Worldwide – **Kingdom Builders building repairs and upgrades**

Building needs to better host seniors, host funerals, use upper building floors, and provide community services to Post Addition. (Longer document sent via email) \$4,292 Air control compressor – Hunter-Prell Co. \$108,196 Motor Shop Electrical Construction Co, Inc. – Installation of power and mini-split A/C units in the auditorium \$145,500 Proposed Otis Elevator System Cost \$10,000 Driven Design Studio for the plans.

Estimated cost: \$267,988 total

12. RISE Corp – **Healthy food distribution**

Address the food insecurity disparities / inequities that COVID-19 have placed on the vulnerable populations. Particularly communities of color, the impoverished, the elderly, disabled and more. Since the onset of the Coronavirus Pandemic (for almost 18 months) RISE Corp has been addressing the food insecurities of the most vulnerable residents of Battle Creek. Distributing 508,125 pounds of healthy food boxes, serving more than 350 families per week. RISE has served 10,750 families and approximately 43,000 individuals. This project will continue to support the most needy individuals and families in communities of color, the elderly, low income, single parents, physically and mentally disabled and all other vulnerable populations in Battle Creek's Washington Heights and Post/Franklin neighborhoods (who are financially distressed, and have a higher risk of catching the coronavirus and dying due to compromised immune systems or other underlying health issues and experiencing trauma as a result of COVID-19), to access healthy food.

Estimated cost: \$1 million

13. Blvcksheep, FRDM City, and Penetrator Events in partnership with global consultancy Sound Diplomacy and workforce development accelerator gener8tor – **The Battle Creek Cultural Council**

The Battle Creek Cultural Council will deliver training, upskilling, marketing support and investment, to grow Battle Creek's cultural economy. It will invest in local artists and businesses, provide global leading research and data to support local policymaking and

represent the city to the world. Its work will be aligned with, and dedicated to, meeting the objectives of the American Rescue Plan Act - to support very small businesses and sole proprietors, impacted industries and disadvantaged communities. This project will deliver small business investment, job creation and education, research/data/policy, marketing, and programming. This is Battle Creek's call to action to use ARPA state and local aid funds to meet this gap in order to offer (1) impacted industry support to the music industry, which has been devastated by this crisis and, (2) technical assistance for hundreds of musicians and music businesses who are overwhelmingly small business owners from underinvested communities via a nationally ranked accelerator program. Because this would support those in the industry left out of the Shuttered Venue Operator Grants, this investment avoids duplicating efforts and immediately restarts the economy through the music and night time industry.

Estimated cost: \$2.1 million total (\$700,000 per year for three years)

14. Workforce Development Institute – Access for All Apprenticeship Readiness Training program

Investment in the program, developed in response to the need to create career opportunities in the building trades for underserved job seekers in Detroit. This received initial support from United Way of Southeast Michigan in 2014. WDI replicated the program in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek in 2019, and has received additional state funding. The program targets residents from underserved communities who are economically disadvantaged, minority, female, veterans, or youths ages 18-24 to provide them with the skills they need to successfully compete for entry into Building Trades Apprenticeships, leaving to a construction industry career that can provide economic self-sufficiency.

Estimated cost: No specific amount requested

15. Neighborhoods Inc. of Battle Creek – Neighborhoods Inc. operating support

Neighborhoods Inc of Battle Creek is quickly becoming a high-performing nonprofit agency with capacity for single family housing development and neighborhood revitalization. NIBC is in the process of new leadership, direction and is positioning themselves to be a strong community development financial institution in Battle Creek. This three year funding would help implement a service framework to address many housing needs in our community. It is expected many low-income families who are struggling with housing will benefit from this funding.

Estimated cost: [blank]

16. Haven of Rest Ministries - \$250,000 for a new Homeless Shelter kitchen and dining facility

The Haven of Rest serves the homeless of our community, and provides over 70,000 meals per year from its kitchens to residents in our homeless shelters and related ministries; We have designs and plans ready to implement in April of 2022 to build a 5,800 square foot modern kitchen and dining facility to provide these meals to our community's most vulnerable residents. This facility will be on

our current site footprint at downtown Battle Creek's East end; \$250,000 in Funds requested from Battle Creek's ARPA will be leveraged by additional funds raised from sources already applied to, including over \$100,000 committed funding from foundations and corporations, and over \$750,000 applied for through shelter modification programs. Total project size will be \$2.1 million when finished. This project will also increase the size of our shelters and the number of beds available to provide for additional homeless needs in our community. Plans and designs have been provided to Battle Creek's zoning and building inspectors in the past, and we are ready to go to construction phase in April of 2022.

Estimated cost: \$2.1 million total

17. Voces – Voces building

Voces would like to request funding support for a building. Voces has proven themselves to be an integral component of the Greater Battle Creek Community. Voces is focused in supporting the LatinX community that historically has contributed largely to the betterment of the community. The partnership between the City of Battle Creek and Voces has been longstanding and continues to be built upon. Voces is beyond grateful to the City of Battle Creek for providing the organization a space to rent. Due to the recent year the need of a building has been highlighted. Voces wanted to host food drives, clothing drives, Covid testing sites, Covid vaccinations, AmeriCorps representatives, etc.... However, due to not having enough space Voces had to get creative to meet the communities needs, and in some instances had to turn down opportunities due to limited space. With this opportunity before us it is timely and appropriate to make such a request. By funding this project directly, the City of Battle Creek is taking a stance that the LatinX community is valued and appreciated in the City of Battle Creek. So much so that "we are willing to provide a house to the fellow LatinX community". Thank for the opportunity to present this ask and more details can be provided upon request. Thank you/Gracias!

Estimated cost: \$2 million

18. Calhoun County Homeless Coalution/SHARE Center??

1. Convert the Hometown Inn into emergency housing for families. The owner is amendable!
2. Direct payment of overdue utility bills. No application - payments based on neighborhood demographics. And if you live outside those designated neighborhoods, you can request payment via an application.
3. Install 3-5 electronic news boards around the city. Scrolling list of community meetings, services, covid info, public service announcements. Covid exposed the weakness of our current system (FB, newspaper, radio, water bills) to publicize important events.
4. Direct financial support for small and medium businesses. Maybe waive fees for utility hook-up; code compliance, construction or other permits.

5. Support for quality childcare. Either direct support of the business or per child subsidy. 6. Support for immigrant residents, who tend to occupy high risk/mandatory (essential worker) jobs. Interpretation, small biz (food, clothing), support for Burma Center.

Estimated cost: [blank]

19. Sharon G. Yaskulski

Anything the fire, police, and EMT/ambulance and such services should get whatever they request.

Estimated cost: [blank]

20. Burma Center – **HVAC replacement**

The Burma Center is a nonprofit organization that provides a wide variety of services to Burmese residents who live and work in Battle Creek and Springfield. Our services range from resource navigation, K-12 supplemental education support, health and wellness programs, interpretation services and much more. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly interrupted our business income while increasing the demand of our services. For example, due to government shutdown and COVID-19 safety protocol our interpretation revenue decreased by 62% in 2020 and we are still not up to full operation. We lost income from event cancelation as well.

Despite the decrease in business services, the Burma Center was and continues to be instrumental in responding to the impact of COVID-19. The organization produced over 34 educational videos for the Burmese community about the pandemic and hosted 5 COVID-19 vaccine clinics, which led to the vaccination of over 450 individuals. The organization worked with public health and city government to provide translation and timely and accurate communication to the Burmese community about COVID-19 rules and regulations.

The Burma Center wants to continue playing a proactive role in mitigating the spread of the COVID-19 virus by improving the quality of air in the building. Equally important, the Burma Center does not have a reliable heat source. This is a great concern for us because our building provides a home to many other organizations: two independent childcare centers, an alternative high school, a program for adults with disabilities, early childhood services, services for veterans, and more. Together with the Burma Center, these organizations serve over 300 people every day. On weekends our building is used for meetings, retreats, town halls, weddings, and parties. The sustainability of the building is critical for not just the Burma Center and its tenants, but for everyone in the community who has a relationship with someone being served here.

For this reason, the Burma Center requests the city to allocate \$300,000 of the ARPA fund toward a new HVAC system for our building. The total cost of the HVAC system is \$815,236.10. In addition to the HVAC system, Burma Center is working on addressing other critical infrastructure update. For that reason, we are working with City of Springfield government, stakeholders, funders,

employers, and community members to run a successful 2.5 million capital campaign. HVAC cost is included in the 2.5 million campaign goal.

Estimated cost: total HVAC cost is \$815,236.10

21. South Michigan Food Bank – Community Food Education Center

South Michigan Food Bank seeks to fund a vibrant food and nutrition community center in Battle Creek for our community to enjoy. The South Michigan Food Bank purchased a building adjacent to our current property, in the Fort Custer Industrial Park, with the vision of turning this into a state of the art community center focused on bringing food to life.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, many community members are spending more time at home, and as a result, preparing more foods at home. Foods distributed through South Michigan Food Bank since the pandemic are up 60%, indicating a sharp increase in food insecurity in our community. Over the pandemic, we have distributed more food than ever before, including 145% more fruits and vegetables. We know there is more work to be done for the recovery from COVID and South Michigan Food Bank is committed to equipping our community with the resources needed to be food secure. Beyond those using resources from South Michigan Food Bank, many other community members are also on limited food budgets, where the need to stretch budgets and improve food resource management skills to make nutritious and inexpensive foods is key.

As we are looking at the recovery from COVID in our community, we see a need to empower families and individuals to have the skills to prepare nutritious foods while extending their budgets. Plans are drafted for this facility with Phase 1 renovations costing an anticipated \$1.5 million. The building will include a versatile indoor teaching space which can be modified for use with school groups, families, and adult groups. This will include a space for live cooking demonstrations as well as work areas for hands-on cooking classes. We plan to have a hoop house and indoor vertical farming to connect with the soil and the root of where food comes from. This facility will offer programs to serve a wide variety of groups in our community for years to come, including youth, seniors, those with medical nutrition concerns, and reaching community members across cultures who are traditionally underserved.

Estimated cost: \$1.5 million

22. South Michigan Food Bank – Food purchase

In 2021, South Michigan Food Bank anticipates distributing 14.5 million pounds of food via 335 partner agencies throughout our 8 counties, keeping pace with the increased need resulting from the pandemic. When COVID-19 hit, we knew that we needed to keep feeding our communities, as these programs give our clients access to free, nutritious options, ensuring everyone in South Michigan has the nutrition they need to succeed. Throughout 2020, we saw an influx of resources for food purchase; however, during 2021, with a persistent need in the community, supply chain shortages, rising food costs, and a decline in in-kind donations from corporate and government donors, we have been purchasing 50% more of the food we are distributing than we were last year,

totaling an additional \$1 million in purchases. We are requesting funds for food purchase for programs across our counties so that our neighbors in need can supplement their meals, not make sacrifices.

Estimated cost: \$1 million

23. The Arc of Calhoun County – **Supported employment/expanded advocacy**

Supported employment and expanded advocacy for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to gain employment and be a part of the community.

Estimated cost: \$150,000

24. Mike Wyszynski – **The Way to Happiness**

The Way to Happiness program restores the common-sense values which unite a community together with common agreements. The proposal is to deliver the course to all of our city officials, law enforcement employees, and all representatives of all the wards. The PSAs are already produced and can be immediately introduced to broadcast companies in our community. The booklet will be made available to schools and at-risk individuals in cooperation with law enforcement and city officials. The booklets are available in 18 languages.

Estimated cost: \$50,000 for eight months

25. Munn X Slaby – **Public Communications Agency**

According to an October 2021 survey by the Statista Research Department, 67% of small business owners experienced a moderate to large negative effect on their business due to COVID-19. During this time, businesses expect a 66% increase in social media content creation, yet 42% of businesses lack the bandwidth to adapt to shifting marketing priorities and create content (Impact Networking).

As such, in order for organizations to succeed in today's ever-evolving digital landscape, strategic communications and brand management are non-negotiable. Furthermore, minority business owners and entrepreneurs, in particular, have historically lacked access to the resources needed to implement integrated marketing solutions, including limited access to outside capital from banks and limited proximity to accredited investors. As a result, minority business owners are forced to rely on scrappy marketing solutions and operate with a limited marketing budget. Thus, limiting their potential and deferring their shot at the American dream.

To alleviate the negative economic impact of COVID-19, we propose the establishment of a centralized communications agency to oversee nonprofit and small business communications/outreach efforts in Battle Creek, Michigan. This solution will eradicate silos in communication efforts that make it difficult for nonprofit leaders and business owners that have been impacted by COVID-19 to access valuable resources, via the implementation of two interrelated assets, including a: (1) Centralized Agency: Charged with

coordinating communications/outreach efforts and providing nonprofits and small businesses with an account manager for 1:1 strategy and implementation support. This 1:1 strategy and implementation support will help identify barriers in communication between local organizations, as well as, within the organization itself, to ensure nonprofits are using best practices when developing plans to promote programming and resources in the community. Small businesses will benefit from this support by receiving 1:1 consultation on best practices to engage their audiences and leverage marketing tools for further insights to inform their business decisions. This support helps alleviate expenses that nonprofits and small businesses may have traditionally budgeted for, but can no longer afford due to necessary cuts and revenue loss as a consequence of COVID-19. These services would include: virtual event planning/strategy, email marketing, social media strategy, website development, print design (brochures, flyers, signage, etc.), content development, and customer service/user experience consulting. (2) City-wide Communications Plan: Informed by those most impacted and built to serve as a repeatable, city-wide framework for all nonprofits and small businesses affected by COVID-19. We would coordinate community meetings and focus groups on behalf of the City to identify gaps in outreach & communications, and barriers to accessing resources. These insights gathered from the community will also be used in the development of a best practice manual that makes recommendations towards closing those gaps and eliminating barriers. Through this initiative, Munn X Slaby, will uniquely use marketing to be facilitators of equity and justice by making marketing affordable & accessible, and more importantly, by equipping nonprofits & small businesses with the tools to (1) amplify and measure their impact, (2) define and target their ideal audience, (3) limit wasted time and money on low impact solutions, (4) build confidence using social media and digital solutions to facilitate action, and lastly (5) engage their audience authentically. By centralizing communications, we believe this will aid in rebuilding our economy by streamlining, optimizing, and enhancing local organizations' outreach practices; ensuring that nonprofits and small businesses have access to, and knowledge of, essential resources, contacts, and support.

Estimated cost: \$850,000 (two-year budget)

26. Community Action – Early Childhood Education Profession Incentive Program

All industries rely on stable, accessible, and quality experiences for young children so that families can work and contribute to our shared community. We are experiencing significant workforce shortages in the early childhood sector. In order to address this shortage, we have developed a set of financial incentives that would both attract and retain workforce. This program will provide financial incentives to early childhood workforce for housing and healthcare that will help address many of the financial barriers they face by working in this profession.

Currently childcare workers earn less than 98% of all other occupations, in addition over 90% of early childcare workers depend on some form of public assistance. There are between 75-100 early childcare staff openings in the Battle Creek community at this time. The Early Childhood profession's current low wages, and the lack of other incentives, creates challenges in attracting and retaining

the workforce from other sectors. This program will work with child care centers in Battle Creek and collaborate to set incentives, and track and monitor progress through the Early Childhood Collaborative work already established in Calhoun County. The incentives will include, providing for rental or homeowner down payment assistance for a year and a half, and telehealth each year for staff who do not have access to medical coverage by their employer. In turn, staff will commit to employment for 3 years. This will create childcare slots for other industries, provide more stable early childhood workers, which in turn provides better educational experiences for children.

Ultimately creating economic development impacts to our community. This aligns with Community Action's mission, as we believe in helping people achieve and maintain independence. Successful early childhood teaching staff will provide excellent academic outcomes for children, who will then become productive members of our community. We are requesting that the City provides \$50,000 towards this program. We will also be seeking additional funding to support this work from other sources.

Estimated cost: We are requesting that the city provides \$50,000 towards this program. We will also be seeking additional funding to support this work from other sources.

27. Kingman Museum – **Kingman Museum: Development of Reopening Plan**

This project will enable KM to identify its future home in the city of Battle Creek after the impact of COVID-19 hastened the urgency of vacating its building to preserve the museum collection for the community. Funds will be used to develop a comprehensive plan detailing how and where KM will fully reopen to the community, to include: Identifying the final location for KM in the City of Battle Creek; Assessing the identified building and site to determine immediate/initial and long-term/ongoing funding needs; Pinpointing specific next steps to use and/or transform KM's physical facilities for maximum impact; Community-facing planning; Planning and executing additional community and educational engagement opportunities during the transitional period.

Having a building in Battle Creek where KM's collection is preserved and displayed to the public will position the museum to move forward with full participation in local partnerships to help raise Battle Creek's profile as a regional cultural center. The reopening of KM will yield the benefit of a positive economic impact, adding to the revitalization efforts underway by the city.

Estimated cost: \$290,553

28. Vania Word – **The District | Art & Culture Council**

We propose the creation of Battle Creek Cultural Council to both support a sector that has been adversely impacted by COVID but also offers unmatched opportunities to create jobs, drive revenue, attract and retain artistic talent and support all residents in a ethical, diverse and inclusive manner.

Estimated cost: \$700,000 per year

29. The Music Center of South Central Michigan – **Children’s Music Programs**

TMC provides music programming and education to children from age 0 through 18 in the form of Music First and Music Second classes, the Sojourner Truth Choir, free afterschool programs including Hip-Hop dance, piano, percussion, free Boys and Girls choruses, and lessons which are supplemented through financial aid. These classes are critical to filling in the gaps left by many schools no longer offering music programming and the inconsistent scheduling of day-to-day school operations leaving many children without important socialization development opportunities.

We are hearing of area children falling behind in reading and math, and even basic communications. Little ones are suffering from a lack of interaction with others outside the home which can lead to a deficiency in brain development, language skills, empathy development, and other basics that MUST be developed at this young age when the brain is creating these important neurological connections. Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience article: “Music instruction appears to accelerate brain development in young children, particularly in the areas of the brain responsible for processing sound, language development, speech perception and reading skills, according to initial results of a five-year study by USC neuroscientists. These initial study results, published recently in the journal Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, provide evidence of the benefits of music education at a time when many schools around the nation have either eliminated or reduced music and arts programs. The study shows music instruction speeds up the maturation of the auditory pathway in the brain and increases its efficiency.”

Plato said: “I would teach children music, physics, and philosophy; but most music, for the patterns in music and all the arts are the keys to learning.” Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner: “Music intelligence is equal in importance to logical-mathematical intelligence, linguistic intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. This is because music promotes all of those things. When we are engaged in music, whether listening, moving along with it, singing or playing an instrument, we engage all parts of the brain. Left, right, front, and back. That’s because the act of making music is a creative and cognitive skill. The whole brain is working all at once, and the arts is the only skill that does this. Even listening to music can have this effect.”

TMC respectfully requests funding to continue our children’s programming. Under normal conditions, income from the Battle Creek Symphony supports these important programs, but these Covid years have left little surplus to do so.

Estimated cost: Total: \$48,000 (IMPACT Program: \$30,000, Choirs: \$8,000, Community Music School: \$10,000)